In the Claims:

1. (Canceled)

2. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor device according to Claim 9, wherein the first dielectric material comprises an organic material, and wherein the second dielectric material comprises an inorganic material.

3. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor device according to Claim 9, wherein the first dielectric material comprises an inorganic material, and wherein the second dielectric material comprises an organic material.

4. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device according to Claim 9, wherein the plurality of first apertures define ~~conductive regions comprise~~ vias, and wherein the plurality of second apertures define ~~conductive regions comprise~~ conductive lines.

5. (Original) The semiconductor device according to Claim 4, wherein the vias have sidewalls, wherein the sidewalls of the vias are substantially vertical.

6. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor device according to Claim 9, wherein the second dielectric material comprises SiLK^{TM} or porous-SiLK^{TM}, and the first dielectric material comprises undoped silicate glass (USG), fluorinated silicon glass (FSG), fluorinated tetraethoxysilate (FTEOS), SiCOH, or porous-SiCOH.

7. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device according to Claim 9, wherein the first dielectric material comprises a material having etch characteristics that are different than the etch characteristics of ~~that is etchable selective to~~ the second dielectric material.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A-semiconductor device, comprising:

a first insulating layer, the first insulating layer comprising a first dielectric material and a second dielectric material formed over the first dielectric material, the second dielectric material comprising a different material than the first dielectric material;

a plurality of first apertures, for receiving a conductive material, defined ~~conductive regions formed~~ in the first dielectric material, the first apertures ~~conductive regions~~ comprising a first pattern;

a plurality of second apertures, for receiving said conductive material, defined ~~conductive regions formed~~ in the second dielectric material, the plurality of second apertures ~~conductive regions~~ comprising a second pattern and contiguous with said plurality of first apertures, the second pattern being different from the first pattern; and

a hard mask disposed over the second dielectric material, wherein the hard mask comprises two or more layers.

10. (Original) The semiconductor device according to Claim 9, wherein the hard mask comprises a layer of SiC_x, SiC_xN_y, SiC_xH_y, $SiC_xN_yH_z$, or SiCOH disposed over the second dielectric material, a layer of Si_xN_y or SiO_2 disposed over the layer of SiC_x, SiC_xN_y, SiC_xH_y,

$SiC_xN_yH_z$, or SiCOH, and a layer of refractory metal nitride disposed over the layer of Si_xN_y or SiO_2.

11. (Original) The semiconductor device according to Claim 10, wherein the layer of SiC_x, SiC_xN_y, SiC_xH_y, $SiC_xN_yH_z$, or SiCOH comprises a first layer of SiC_x and a second layer of N-SiC_x disposed over the first layer of SiC_x.

12. (Currently Amended) A semiconductor device, comprising:

a first insulating layer, wherein the first insulating layer is disposed over a plurality of conductive lines in a second insulating layer, the first insulating layer comprising a first dielectric material and a second dielectric material formed over the first dielectric material, the second dielectric material comprising a different material than the first dielectric material;

a plurality of first apertures, for receiving a conductive material, defined ~~conductive regions formed~~ in the first dielectric material, the first plurality of apertures ~~conductive regions~~ comprising a first pattern; and

a plurality of second apertures, for receiving said conductive material, defined ~~conductive regions formed~~ in the second dielectric material, the plurality of second apertures ~~conductive regions~~ comprising a second pattern and contiguous with said plurality of first apertures, the second pattern being different from the first pattern.

13. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device according to Claim 12, wherein the conductive material comprises ~~lines comprise~~ copper, and wherein the first dielectric layer

comprises a material having a coefficient of thermal expansion (CTE) close to the CTE of copper~~the conductive lines~~.

14. (Original) The semiconductor device according to Claim 13, further comprising a cap layer disposed over the second insulating layer.

15. (Original) The semiconductor device according to Claim 15, wherein the cap layer comprises Si_xN_y, $N\text{-}SiC_x$, SiC_x, SiC_xH_y, $SiCOH_x$, $SiC_xN_yH_z$, SiN_xH_y, or combinations thereof.

16. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor device according to Claim 14, further comprising an adhesion film disposed over a top surface of the cap layer.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor device according to Claim 24, wherein the first dielectric material comprises an organic material, and wherein the second dielectric material comprises an inorganic material.

19. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor device according to Claim 24, wherein the first dielectric material comprises an inorganic material, and wherein the second dielectric material comprises an organic material.

20. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device according to Claim 24, wherein the vias have sidewalls, and wherein said [[the]] sidewalls of the vias are substantially vertical.

21. (Currently Amended) The semiconductor device according to Claim 24, wherein the second dielectric material comprises a material having etch characteristics that are different than the etch characteristics of ~~that is etchable selective to~~ the first dielectric material.

22. (Canceled)

23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) A semiconductor device, comprising:

a workpiece;

a first insulating layer disposed over the workpiece;

a plurality of first conductive lines formed in the first insulating layer;

a second insulating layer formed over the first conductive lines and the first insulating layer, the second insulating layer comprising a first dielectric material and a second dielectric material formed over the first dielectric material, the second dielectric material comprising a different material than the first dielectric material;

a plurality of vias, for receiving a conductive material, defined ~~formed~~ in the first dielectric material;

a plurality of apertures, for receiving said conductive material to form second conductive lines, defined ~~formed~~ in the second dielectric material, said plurality of apertures contiguous with said plurality of vias; and

a hard mask disposed over the second dielectric material, wherein the hard mask comprises two or more layers.

25. (Original) The semiconductor device according to Claim 24, wherein the hard mask comprises a layer of SiC_x, SiC_xN_y, SiC_xH_y, $SiC_xN_yH_z$, or SiCOH disposed over the second dielectric material, a layer of Si_xN_y or SiO_2 disposed over the layer of SiC_x, SiC_xN_y, SiC_xH_y, $SiC_xN_yH_z$, or SiCOH and a layer of refractory metal nitride disposed over the layer of Si_xN_y or SiO_2.

26. (Original) The semiconductor device according to Claim 25, wherein the layer of SiC_x. SiC_xN_y, SiC_xH_y, $SiC_xN_yH_z$, or SiCOH comprises a first layer of SiC_x and a second layer of N-SiC_x disposed over the first layer of SiC_x.

27. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor device according to Claim 24, wherein the first conductive lines comprise copper, wherein the first dielectric layer comprises a material having a coefficient of thermal expansion (CTE) close to the CTE of the first conductive lines.

28. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor device according to Claim 24, further comprising a cap layer disposed over the first insulating layer.

29. (Original) The semiconductor device according to Claim 28, wherein the cap layer comprises Si_xN_y, N-SiC_x, SiC_x, SiC_xH_y, $SiCOH_x$, $SiC_xN_yH_z$, SiN_xH_y, or combinations thereof.

30. (Original) The semiconductor device according to Claim 28, further comprising an adhesion film disposed over a top surface of the cap layer.

31. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor device according to Claim 24, further comprising an adhesion film disposed over a top surface of the first dielectric layer.

32. (Previously Presented) The semiconductor device according to Claim 24, wherein the second dielectric material comprises SiLK™ or porous-SiLK™, and the first dielectric material comprises undoped silicate glass (USG), fluorinated silicon glass (FSG), fluorinated tetraethoxysilate (FTEOS), SiCOH, or porous-SiCOH.

33. (Currently Amended) A semiconductor device, comprising:

a first insulating layer, the first insulating layer comprising a first dielectric material, an adhesion layer in contact with and covering said first dielectric material, and a second dielectric material formed over and in contact with the adhesion layer, the second dielectric material comprising a different material than the first dielectric material;

a plurality of first apertures, for receiving a conductive material, defined ~~conductive regions formed~~ in the first dielectric material, the first apertures ~~conductive regions~~ comprising a first pattern;

a plurality of second apertures, for receiving said conductive material, defined ~~conductive regions formed~~ in the second dielectric material, the plurality of second apertures ~~conductive regions~~ comprising a second pattern and contiguous with said plurality of first apertures, the second pattern being different from the first pattern;

a hard mask disposed over the second dielectric material, wherein the hard mask comprises two or more layers.